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**FROM:** Aisha N. Lowe, Ph.D.  
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**RE:** Assembly Bill 1705 Implementation

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Assembly Bill 1705 was signed into law by the Governor in September of 2022. This bill supports full and comprehensive implementation of the landmark legislation AB 705 (Irwin 2017) that transformed placement and developmental education in the California Community College system.

The dedicated efforts of the system to implement AB 705 produced unprecedented increases in the number and percentage of students completing math and English milestones for transfer and a college degree. Every student group examined to date has achieved substantial gains in access to, and completion of, transfer-level math and English, but critical equity gaps remain.

AB 1705 addresses issues underlying inequitable and uneven implementation of AB 705 and supports the system's work to ensure that placement systems and curricular structures are designed to produce strong and equitable placement and completion outcomes.

**This guidance memorandum addresses:**

- The beneficial impact of AB 705 and the real progress the system has made to date, and
- Implementation of AB 1705, including the key provisions of the law, recommended action items, and implementation resources.

This is the first in a series of resources and tools that will be made available to support AB 1705 implementation. **Additional implementation guides, progress updates and webinars will be released in early 2023.**

**Beneficial Impact of AB 705**

## **AB 1705 Implementation**

December 23, 2022

Prior to AB 705, standardized placement tests were pervasively used to bar student access to transfer-level math and English, despite growing evidence that these tests did a poor job of predicting student performance. About 80% of California community college students were forced to take at least one developmental course in English or math, and many students faced up to two years or more of developmental coursework before having access to courses needed for a college degree. Attrition in developmental sequences was high, particularly for African American and Latino/a students who were placed into developmental education at greater rates and far deeper into developmental sequences.

AB 705 reforms built on grassroots efforts in California community colleges to use high school performance in placement and to replace developmental courses with concurrent support at the transfer-level. In the first term of mandatory implementation, the percentage of students starting in transfer-level courses increased from 38% to 95% in English and 24% to 78% in math (fall 2015 vs. 2019). The percentage of students completing transfer-level courses within one year of starting in the discipline increased from 49% to 68% in English and 26% to 51% in math. Despite pandemic disruptions, completion stabilized at 66% in English and 54% in math (fall 2020). No other educational initiative in California community colleges has produced such dramatic gains.

Extensive research has examined the impact of AB 705 on demographic student groups and special populations. During the first year of mandatory implementation (2019-2020), every group examined achieved large completion gains in both English and math in one year, including African American and Latinx students, low-income students, students in 10 different categories of disabilities, STEM students with weaker math preparation, students over the age of 35, foster youth and veterans. For most of these groups, math completion doubled. In addition, a larger and more diverse group of students enrolled in and completed transfer-level business and STEM courses, including a substantial gain in calculus completion. The Chancellor's Office [Transfer Level Completion Dashboard](#) is regularly updated and shows completion gains at the state and college level when disaggregating by ethnicity, gender, age, high school GPA, disability status, EOPS status, veteran, foster youth, MESA, Puente, and Umoja. The resource section of this memo includes links to these studies and the dashboard.

### **Implementation of Assembly Bill 1705**

[Assembly Bill 1705 \(Irwin, 2002\)](#) builds on the strong foundation of AB 705 and resolves issues impeding implementation. AB 1705 statutory language is divided into four sections summarized below:

1. Legislative Counsel's Digest gives an overview of new amendments to the Education Code.
2. Section 1 states the findings and declarations of the legislature that provide a rationale for the amendments. This section gives an overview of the research into AB 705's positive impact on students and equity, as well as states the problems with uneven and inequitable implementation that AB 1705 addresses.

3. Section 2 states the intent of the legislature in amending the Education Code. Notable is the clarification in §78212.5, subd. (a), that “students shall be directly placed into, and, when beginning coursework in English or mathematics, shall be enrolled in, transfer-level English and mathematics courses.”
4. Section 3 integrates new amendments to Education Code §78213 into the familiar mandates of the parent legislation, AB 705.

This guidance memo will dissect this section to underscore **new** action items and prohibitions that are now required by law. Due to the length and complexity of the law, we will group items by topic. At the end of this discussion is a checklist of recommended action items for AB 1705 implementation.

### **KEY PROVISIONS OF AB 1705**

The key provisions of AB 1705 are stated in §78213, subd. (i) and replicated in its entirety below:

- (1) By July 1, 2023, all United States high school graduates, and those who have received a high school equivalency certificate, regardless of background or special population status, who plan to pursue a certificate, degree, or transfer program offered by the California community colleges, shall be directly placed into, and, when beginning coursework in English or mathematics, enrolled in, transfer-level English and mathematics (quantitative reasoning) courses.
- (2) If the student has a declared academic goal, the mathematics (quantitative reasoning) and English coursework shall satisfy a requirement of the student’s intended certificate or associate degree or a requirement for transfer within the intended major.
- (3) A community college shall not require students to repeat coursework that they have successfully completed in high school or college or take coursework that repeats competencies that the student has demonstrated through other methods of credit for prior learning.
- (4) A community college shall not enroll into noncredit coursework students who have graduated from a United States high school or been issued a high school equivalency certificate, as a substitute or replacement for direct placement and enrollment into transfer-level English and mathematics (quantitative reasoning) coursework as described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (c).

### **EXCEPTIONS TO THE KEY PROVISIONS**

1. Some student populations are exempt from §78213, subd. (i), such as students pursuing a GED or students with documented disabilities taking educational assistance classes, or students in certificate programs that do not have math or English requirements. Here is the full list of exceptions from Education Code §78213, subd. (j):
  - (1) Students who have not graduated from a United States high school or been issued a high school equivalency certificate.

- (2) Students enrolled in a certificate program without English or mathematics requirements.
  - (3) Students enrolled in a noncredit ESL course who have not graduated from a United States high school or been issued a high school equivalency certificate.
  - (4) Students with documented disabilities in educational assistance classes, as described in Section 56028 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, who are otherwise not able to benefit from general college classes even with appropriate academic adjustments, auxiliary aids, and services.
  - (5) Students enrolled in adult education programs who have not graduated from a United States high school or been issued a high school equivalency certificate.
  - (6) Students enrolled in adult education programs who are enrolled in coursework other than mathematics or English.
  - (7) Current high school students in dual enrollment or taking courses not available in their local high school.
  - (8) The community college has provided local research and data pursuant to subdivisions (e) and (f) to verify the benefit of the placement and enrollment into transfer-level coursework that does not satisfy a requirement for the intended certificate or associate degree or a requirement for transfer within the intended major.
2. §78213, subd. (d) allows college-level placement and enrollment in lieu of transfer-level placement and enrollment for:
- A. students in career technical programs with specific requirements, as dictated by the program’s advisory or accrediting body, that cannot be satisfied with transfer-level coursework
  - B. specific groups of students for whom the college has provided local research showing that both of the following are true:
    - The student is highly unlikely to succeed in a transfer-level English or mathematics course based on their high school grade point average and coursework, and
    - The enrollment in pretransfer-level coursework will improve the student’s probability of completing transfer-level coursework in English and mathematics within a one-year timeframe or, for credit ESL students, completing transfer-level coursework in English within a three-year timeframe.
3. §78213, subd. (e) states an exemption to §78213, subd. (i)(2) by allowing colleges to require **transfer-level** prerequisite coursework that does not satisfy requirements for a student’s intended certificate, degree, or transfer in non-STEM programs if the college has provided local research by July 2023 showing that both of the following are true:
- The student is highly unlikely to succeed in a transfer-level English or mathematics course that satisfies a requirement for the intended certificate or associate degree, or a requirement for transfer within the intended major, and
  - The enrollment will improve the student’s probability of completing transfer-level mathematics or English coursework that satisfies a requirement for the intended certificate or

associate degree, or a requirement for transfer within the intended major, within a one-year timeframe.

If evidence shows the prerequisites do not improve student progress as described above, the college shall not require or recommend the prerequisite coursework after July 2024.

4. §78213, subd. (f) states the following stipulations and exemptions for STEM programs where **transfer-level** prerequisite coursework does not satisfy requirements for a student's intended associate degree or transfer within a STEM major:
  - A. Transfer-level prerequisite coursework prior to the first calculus course is limited to at most two transfer-level courses as of July 2024.
  - B. By July 2024 colleges shall provide local research showing that transfer-level prerequisites to the first STEM calculus course improve the student's progression to and through calculus by showing that all of the following are true:
    - The student is highly unlikely to succeed in the first STEM calculus course without the additional transfer-level preparation,
    - The enrollment will improve the student's probability of completing the first STEM calculus course, and
    - The enrollment will improve the student's persistence to and completion of the second calculus course if required for the program.

If evidence shows the prerequisites do not improve student progress as described above, the college shall not require or recommend the prerequisite coursework after July 2025.

### **CONCURRENT SUPPORT**

Education Code §78213, subd. (k) clarifies colleges' obligations to provide access to extra academic support for students enrolled in transfer-level English and math/quantitative reasoning courses. "For students who need or desire extra academic support when enrolled in transfer-level mathematics or English coursework, community colleges shall provide access to tutoring, support-enhanced transfer-level mathematics and English courses, concurrent low-unit credit or similar contact hour noncredit corequisite coursework for transfer-level mathematics and English, or other academic supports."

"A community college may require students to enroll in additional concurrent support, including additional language support for ESL students, if it is determined that the support will increase the student's likelihood of passing the transfer-level English or mathematics course."

### **CHANGES TO PLACEMENT INCLUDING GUIDED PLACEMENT OR SELF-PLACEMENT**

Education Code §78213, subd. (c) clarifies issues with placement that arose during implementation of AB 705. New items are integrated into previous AB 705 mandates. Here are highlights of the new additions:

1. Colleges are still required to use high school transcript data to place students into English and math coursework, for which the AB 705 requirement to use multiple measures is replaced with the clarification that, “using high school grade point average as a composite of student performance over multiple years of high school coursework is a sufficient use of multiple evidence-based measures.” (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(4).)
2. A new addition prohibits colleges from requiring students to repeat coursework completed in high school. “The multiple measures placement shall not require students to repeat coursework that they successfully completed in high school or college or for which they demonstrated competency through other methods of credit for prior learning.” (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(3).)
3. Multiple measures placement into transfer-level coursework is further clarified as transfer-level coursework that satisfies requirements for the student’s academic goal. “The multiple measures placement gives students access to a transfer-level course that will satisfy a requirement for the intended certificate or associate degree, or a requirement for transfer within the intended major.” (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(3).)
4. Colleges must use self-reported high school information when transcript data is not available; this is **not optional** but required. (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(6).)
5. Colleges may use guided placement or self-placement for students who have not graduated from high school, or for high school graduates unable to provide self-reported high school information; however guided placement and self-placement must now meet the same placement standards used with multiple measures. Specifically, “the placement and enrollment resulting from the guided or self-placement method shall maximize the probability that students enter and complete transfer-level mathematics and English coursework that satisfies a requirement of the intended certificate or associate degree or a requirement for transfer within the intended major, within a one-year timeframe of their initial attempt in the discipline.” (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(7).)

Guided placement and self-placement shall not result in placement or enrollment below the transfer-level or into transfer-level coursework that does not satisfy requirements for the student’s program of study.

### **SPECIFIC PROHIBITIONS**

In Education Code §78213, subd. (h), AB 1705 specifically prohibits colleges from using the following as justifications for placing and enrolling students into pretransfer-level coursework or transfer-level coursework in English, math or quantitative reasoning that does not satisfy a requirement for the student’s intended certificate or associate degree, or a requirement for transfer within the intended major:

1. The length of time between a student’s enrollment date at the community college and the student’s high school graduation date.
2. Whether the student belongs to a special population, including, but not limited to, foster youth, veterans, economically disadvantaged students or those students who participate in

extended opportunity programs and services (EOPS), participants in disability services and programs for students (DSPS), and students in Umoja, Puente, or Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) programs.

3. Whether the student can provide a high school transcript, self-reports high school information, or uses self-placement or guided placement.

### **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)**

AB 1705 made only one clarification to ESL placement as described in AB 705. The AB 705 phrase “evidence-based multiple measures” is now “multiple evidence-based measures” in AB 1705.

Education Code §78213, subd. (c)(5) states, “Community colleges shall use multiple evidence-based measures for placing students into English as a Second Language (ESL) coursework. For those students placed into credit ESL coursework, their placement should maximize the probability that they will complete degree and transfer requirements in English within three years.”

### **Required Validation of Practices**

AB 1705 explicitly sets standards for colleges to validate practices that result in enrollments that undermine the core tenet of placement and enrollment into transfer-level coursework required by the student’s certificate, associate degree, or transfer within the major, as described in Education Code §78213, subd. (i). These standards do not apply to student groups described in §78213, subd. (j) as exceptions.

Validation of practices are required for:

1. Pretransfer-level enrollment (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (d).) [Note: This does not apply to corequisite support courses linked to transfer-level courses, even if the corequisite course is a pretransfer-level course].
2. For students in non-STEM programs of study, enrollment in transfer-level prerequisites that do not satisfy requirements for the student’s certificate, associate degree, or transfer within the major (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (e).)
3. For students in STEM programs of study, enrollment in transfer-level prerequisites that do not satisfy requirements for the student’s certificate, associate degree, or transfer within the major (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (f).)

The Chancellor’s Office will disseminate additional guidance on the process and templates to submit required validation data.

### **Enforcement**

AB 1705 reflects current Title 5 stipulations that allow the Chancellor’s Office to ensure consistent implementation across colleges. Specifically, “The Chancellor’s Office of the California Community Colleges may require a community college or community college district to change or

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adopt a placement policy or practice identified by the Chancellor's Office to ensure that a community college or community college district's placement and enrollment of students into mathematics, English, and ESL is consistent with the requirements of this section." (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (l).)

The Board of Governors maintains authority over establishing regulations to "ensure that the measures, instruments, and placement models selected by a community college demonstrate that they guide English and mathematics placements and enrollment to achieve the goal of maximizing the probability that a student will enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English and mathematics that satisfies a requirement of the intended certificate or associate degree or a requirement for transfer within the intended major within a one-year timeframe, and credit ESL students will complete transfer-level coursework in English within a timeframe of three years." (Ed. Code, §78213, subd. (c)(8).)

### Required Action for AB 1705 Implementation

1. By July 1, 2023, all United States high school graduates, and those who have received a high school equivalency certificate, regardless of background or special population status, who plan to pursue a certificate, degree, or transfer program offered by the California community colleges, shall be directly placed into, and, when beginning coursework in English or mathematics/quantitative reasoning, enrolled in, transfer-level English and mathematics courses.
2. The transfer-level English and math/quantitative reasoning coursework shall satisfy a requirement of the student's intended certificate or associate degree or a requirement for transfer within the intended major.
  - a. Extended timeline for non-STEM programs:

If the college currently requires students in non-STEM programs to take transfer-level prerequisites that do not satisfy the student's intended associate degree, colleges shall complete the data template provided by the Chancellor's Office by July 2023 to verify that the prerequisite improves student progress in the program per standards in Education Code §78213, subd. (e). The prerequisite requirement may only be continued after July 2024 if it meets these standards.

For example, the [Transfer Model Curricula for Business Administration](#) includes applied calculus or finite math as an option but does not include college algebra; therefore, if a college requires some students to take college algebra as a prerequisite to applied calculus or finite math, the college will need to complete the data template to show that college algebra meets the standards of Education Code §78213, subd. (e).

- b. Extended timeline for STEM programs:

By July 2024, colleges shall have at most two transfer-level prerequisites that do not satisfy the student's intended associate degree. For example, calculus is the lowest level of math that satisfies the [Transfer Model Curricula for Physics](#) or lower division transfer requirements for an engineering major. Colleges that require some students to take three transfer-level math prerequisites, such as college algebra, trigonometry and precalculus, before gaining access to calculus will need to replace this three-course preparatory sequence with at most two courses.

If the college currently requires some students in STEM programs to take any transfer-level prerequisites that do not satisfy the student's intended associate degree, colleges shall complete the data template provided by the Chancellor's Office by July 2024 to verify that the student's progress is improved by taking the prerequisite(s) per standards in Education Code §78213, subd. (f). The prerequisite requirements may only be continued after July 2025 if these standards are met.

3. By July 2023, a community college shall not require students to repeat coursework that they have successfully completed in high school or college or take coursework that repeats competencies that the student has demonstrated through other methods of credit for prior learning. STEM students who have successfully completed precalculus in high school shall have access to calculus if their program requires calculus.
4. By July 2023, a community college shall not enroll into noncredit coursework students who have graduated from a United States high school or been issued a high school equivalency certificate, as a substitute or replacement for direct placement and enrollment into transfer-level English and mathematics coursework. Colleges can enroll students into non-credit corequisites that require co-enrollment in transfer-level coursework.
5. By July 2023, pretransfer-level enrollment shall only occur for students described as exceptions to the core tenet of AB 1705 in Education Code §78213, subd. (j). For students in non-transferable certificate or associate degree programs with English or math requirements, pretransfer-level enrollment can occur only if the program's accrediting body or advisory board requires coursework that cannot be satisfied with transfer-level coursework.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO PRODUCE STRONG AND EQUITABLE COMPLETION**

In Education Code §78212.5, subd. (d), the legislature captures the intent of AB 1705 for California's community colleges to "create the largest opportunities possible for access to transfer-level courses, ensure the greatest enrollment possible into those courses, and provide students the support they need to perform well and be successful in completing those courses." To realize the full promise of this law, colleges need to implement additional strategies to ensure

that completion is maximized and equitable. Below are recommended actions that are central to achieving this goal.

- Disaggregate completion rates by using the Chancellor's Office [Transfer Level Gateway Completion Dashboard](#) to identify student groups with disproportionately lower outcomes and work to mitigate those gaps.

Implement the strategies provided in [AB 705 Improvement Plans Form](#), including:

- Develop or expand concurrent supports for students in transfer-level English, math, and quantitative reasoning coursework, including tutoring, corequisite courses or enhanced transfer-level courses.
- Develop or expand transferable quantitative reasoning options that articulate to the California State University for general education Area B4, including options for students seeking only the associate degree (e.g., transferable quantitative reasoning courses, such as Financial Literacy, Technical Mathematics for the Trades, Liberal Arts Math, contextualized statistics courses such as Business Statistics or Psychology Statistics, etc.)
- If pretransfer-level courses are offered, restrict enrollment to only those students described as exceptions in Education Code §78213, subd. (j) to AB 1705's core tenet.
- Ensure that for associate degree programs requiring coursework with pretransfer-level math/quantitative reasoning prerequisites, prerequisites are satisfied by any one of the following: 1) placement into, enrollment into, or completion of a transfer-level math or quantitative reasoning course to fulfill the prerequisite, 2) satisfactory completion of equivalent high school coursework, or 3) credit for prior learning.
- Intentionally design the messaging within the placement process, as well as matriculation, orientation and advising services, to communicate an equity-minded belief in student capacity to succeed in transfer-level coursework and provide information about available academic supports.
- Utilize early alert systems to connect struggling students with relevant supports, monitor the efficacy of these systems and make improvements as necessary.
- Integrate resources into gateway courses that connect students with support for basic needs, mental health services, stress management, etc.
- Invest in professional development focused on high challenge, high support, equity-minded teaching practices with the goal of achieving stronger, more consistent, and more equitable pass rates across sections of the same transfer-level course.
- Invest in communities of practice for instructors teaching gateway courses to share activities and practices that humanize the classroom, promote interaction and engagement, foster a sense of belonging, communicate a belief in student capacity and growth, and mitigate stereotype-threat.
- Create safe places for equity conversations about section-level success rate data disaggregated by race, income, gender, etc. to help faculty develop a reflective teaching

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practice that fosters innovation to improve learning outcomes for marginalized student populations.

### **Select Resources**

The following resources include data and research on the implementation of AB 705 which colleges can use to inform their ongoing implementation of equitable placement and completion. This list is not exhaustive, but rather a selection of relevant items for consideration. The Chancellor's Office will also release additional implementation guides, resources and webinars in early 2023.

[CCCCO Transfer-level Completion Dashboard](#)

[Comparative Throughput Analysis for AB 705 Compliance: Disaggregation by Gender and Ethnicity to Check for Disproportionate Impact](#) (MMAP 2018)

[Comparative Throughput Analysis for AB 705 Compliance: Disaggregation by EOPS and DSPS Student Populations](#) (MMAP 2018)

[Throughput in Transfer-level English and Math for Students with Disabilities](#) (MMAP 2022)

[Maximizing Math Throughput of Students Who Did Not Complete Algebra 2 in High School](#) (MMAP 2021)

[Community College Math in California's New Era of Student Access](#) (PPIC 2021)

[Emerging Practices in ESL Guided Self-Placement](#) (MMAP 2022)

#### **ESL College Spotlights:**

[City College of San Francisco - Steps to Credit Program](#)

[College of San Mateo - Word Jam](#)

[Cypress College - ESL Course Transferability](#)

[Cypress College - ESL Milestone Certificates](#)

[Orange Coast College - SLO Assessments](#)

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